

# Among Friends

No 95: Summer 2004

Published by the Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation

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## Ministry

Lately I have often been touched by something coming and going through my mind. As widely known, 'Quaker' is a nickname that was given to early Friends. They felt the truth in it and accepted it, and the Religious Society since then accepted it and took it up with some pride. But do we accept only the name nowadays or do we identify with the essential content of it?

I can accept the name and I call myself a 'quaker', because for me it is a question of long time experience. Not very often, indeed, but sometimes I happen to tremble. I can't influence it, but it is there, I am breathing deeper and my speech becomes low, I "quake" unintentionally as in this moment, when having waited for a time to be ready to speak in the meeting. My wife and I have trembled, when discovering that she was pregnant with our children, and again when the kids were born. I have trembled overwhelmed by the Light and as well whilst experiencing the absence of the Divine. I have trembled when learning that I had made mistakes or had done wrong. My trembling had occurred in moments of despair and sorrow, and of happiness, and amongst Friends in moments of deep concern.

Yet in the long years of living amongst Friends very rarely I have heard a word about such an unexpected and not to be controlled inner movement, and what it meant for them. It seems to me as if most Friends do not dare to mention similar experiences. I wonder why, for I suppose it is not only my longing that we in our meetings for

worship reach a stage of inner communion from time to time that makes us quiver and shake – by joy, or by shame, or by consternation.

I have a wish for everyone who attends our meetings for worship: that each will some day experience this personal feeling, or even that we all together, in a joint spiritual emotion, will experience this wonder: to quake.

*Konrad Tempel - Ministry at Switzerland YM*

## News from Hungary

It is not easy to be Quakerly in Eastern Europe as we cannot grow into the Quaker way of life through symbiosis. This is how we in Budapest are experimenting by introducing a little structure into our Meetings for Worship:

When we have all settled down in a circle, each of us may give voice to his or her concerns, joys, sorrows, cares or burdens in a nutshell so that we could support one another more meaningfully during the silence. As a transition into the silence, we play a short piece of music, be it a Taize song or a short piece of classical music which can help to tune in. A 45 minute – not necessarily unbroken – silence follows. After shaking hands, a time for reflections may set in when in the form of worship-sharing we share with one another what has emerged from the silence.

We feel a definite need for learning. Our immediate plans include sharing with one another what individual members of the meeting have found stimulating in recent Quaker publications like the German language Quaker or the Quaker Monthly (which we regularly receive from our twin group in Wem).

The national director for Hungary of Habitat for Humanity contacted us and inspired us to offer the organisation a work weekend in the spring.

A young friend from the meeting was invited to attend a Woodbrooke consultation on the Catchpool Fund in March. We hope to use it for individual and group purposes. We also have plans for translating Quaker literature into Hungarian.

Comments and/or suggestions are most welcome!

*Zsuzsa Eastland*

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## Let us then see what Love will do.

### Progress on the World Gathering of Young Friends

Many of you will be aware that Young Friends around the world are working towards a World Gathering of Young Friends (WGYF) to be held at Lancaster University in northwest England from 16th-24th August 2005. I would like to share some of the planning committee's vision for the gathering and tell you more about what has been done and what still needs to be done for the gathering to be a success.

There is a feeling among Young Friends involved in the planning process that God is moving among us, He is stirring us into action, God wants this gathering to happen! Our vision is for a conference of around 350 Young Friends, aged between 18 and 35 from every country in the world where Quaker's are faithfully witnessing God's message to those around them. We want to have programmed and unprogrammed Friends, Evangelical Friends, Liberal Friends and Conservative Friends. We want to bring them together to explore our theme for the gathering "Let us then see what Love will do. I am the vine and you are the branches. Now, what fruit shall we bear?" What do Friends have to say to the world and how should we be saying. I believe now is the time to learn from each other to move forward. We cannot be limited by our differences but we must listen to God's call for us as the early Friends did and were so good at doing.

Our vision does not just include the weeklong conference next August. We see it is a way to energise the Religious Society of Friends as a whole. To encourage Young Friends to get involved with their Yearly Meetings, to tell their Yearly Meetings what they have discovered at the gathering. We hope the impact of the gathering will be felt by all Friends. The questions we struggle with at the gathering will become questions that all Friends will be asking. The discoveries that we make at the gathering will be discovered by all Friends to own and act upon.

With just over a year to go to gathering there is much work to be done but here are some of things that have been happening. We have been networking across the world. We have sent representatives to the FWCC Triennial in New Zealand, to an African Young Friends conference, and as I write this one of the Europe Based Committee members is travelling across the US

spreading the message of the gathering. This outreach has led to groups of Young Friends forming in North America, Asia/West Pacific and Africa all striving to do their part for the gathering.

Application forms have been sent out. We have asked every Yearly Meeting to send two representatives to the gathering to ensure a good spread of participants. There will also be around 150 places available on an open system for all Young Friends to apply for. We have begun doing research into visas for participants travelling to the UK. Programming is being researched. We are asking Young Friends around the world what they would like to see at the gathering in terms of speakers, workshops, worship and so on. Fundraising is going on in earnest. We have received some grants from trusts and contributions from meetings. Thanks to all those Friends who have donated so far and for those who haven't, there is still time!

There is still much work to be done. We are attempting to improve our methods of working by delegating tasks to smaller groups. For example small groups have already been set up on applications, visas and employee management. Other groups forming include, site committee, finance group, worship, publicity and many more.

We have appointed Anna Dunford as our European-based administrator. If you would like to find out more about WGYF, make a donation or get involved in the planning see the website [www.wgyf.org](http://www.wgyf.org) or contact Anna on [infor@wgyf.org](mailto:infor@wgyf.org) or by phone on 0131 466 1263 or write to WGYF, 1 Cluny Terrace, Edinburgh, EH10 4SW, Scotland.

The Psalmist proclaimed. "How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for brothers and sisters to dwell together in harmony!" I can't promise harmony at the World Gathering of Young Friends but I can hope for a more profound understanding of God's call to Friends the world over and how wonderful that would be!

*Aidan MacCartney, Ireland YM*

## EMES Annual Meeting, Easter 2003



*The Europe & Middle East Section consists of those yearly meetings/groups of Friends within Europe and the Middle East which are affiliated with FWCC. All members of yearly meetings/groups affiliated with EMES are members of FWCC. The Annual Meeting is attended by representatives of the affiliated yearly meetings and groups and takes place at Easter each year. This year we met in Sweden. Chris Lawson of Britain Yearly Meeting reflects:*

This was my first visit to Svartbäcken. I delighted in the beauty of the setting but it was the love for the place and the people who came to it shown by the Friends of the area that made it have such a special Quaker family feel. From this base we acknowledged, nonetheless, what we gained from a wider religious world. That benefit is my personal experience too.

Julia Ryberg's talk about what Quakerism has to offer included telling us of the satisfaction she had found from a close involvement with the local Swedish Lutheran Church. Yet in secular Sweden there was much she wanted to share about a Quaker view of life. Zoltán Ferenczi brought copies from Hungary of the recently published English translation of the late József Farkas' "alternative theology" book, 'Break Up Your Fallow Ground'. Éva Farkas from the Budapest Friends Group had spoken at last year's Section meeting of how her husband, a Lutheran pastor, had evolved a radical theology which linked in many ways with Quakerism. The book is not a quick read but it is interesting to see his fresh Biblical insights and his emphasis on the living

out of faith. Those who had been at the FWCC Triennial spoke about the experience of being with Friends of differing persuasions - a positive time with a strengthening of commitment to the FWCC.

Our Saturday afternoon walk was to nearby sites connected to St. Bridget, who is much revered in Sweden but for whom a cleft in a rock with the open sky above was her place of prayer. In the evening, we walked the Svartbäcken labyrinth, painted on a specially made floor covering to fit the large worship room with its view out to trees, a lake and sky. As the light faded, some quietly walked whilst others watched. The walking was a fascinating experience of moving on a long winding path, knowing it would reach the centre but not knowing how, attentively passing other walkers on a neighbouring section, sometimes predictably, sometimes surprisingly for they had been seen on the other side just before. Always one could look out from the path of the labyrinth, either at the beauty of our world or at those sitting quietly alongside. It was meditative, prayerful. I walked in memory of a good friend the news of whose death reached me over the weekend.

We did do plenty of business too, in a businesslike and Quakerly way, and kept our Section strengthened and on the move for the work it can do.

*Chris Lawson*

# Interreligious and intercultural dialogue in the wake of 11-M: A portrait of the Interfaith movement in Madrid

Their faces beam with life, filling the newspapers with their promise: Patricia Rzaca, 7 months, Polish, daughter of 34 year old construction worker Wieslaw Rzaca. Sanaa Ben Saleh Imadaquan, 13, Moroccan. Anca Valeria Bodea, 26 year old nanny, Romanian. Rex Reynaldo Ferrer, 20 years old, Filipino, training to become a carpenter. Ana Isabel Gil Pérez, 29 years, Spanish, 7 months pregnant with Samuel, due to be born on the 22nd of May. These are just some of the names of the 192 victims who lost their lives in the tragic terrorist attacks on the 11th of March in Madrid. On that day, a series of bombs exploded on four different commuter trains winding their way to the Atocha and Charmartín stations in Madrid. They exploded during rush hour, at 7:36 and 7:39 in the morning, causing the worst terrorist attack in Spanish history.

In the aftermath of the attacks, Madrileños and Spaniards came together in an incredible display of strength and solidarity, manifesting their opposition to terrorism by the millions. Black ribbons representing the victims of terrorism appeared on every shop window, and were proudly displayed from countless residential balconies. The massive demonstrations following the attacks were the largest and most dramatic in Spain's history-with firsttime participation from members of the royal family. Three days after the massacre, with the knowledge that the authors of the attack were Al-Queda members, and the motive, Spain's participation in the war on Iraq, national elections brought the surprise victory of the socialist PSOE party to power.

These are among the most visible after-effects of the tragedy. However, less well known are the effects of the attacks on interreligious relations in Madrid. How have Madrileños reacted to the fact that the perpetrators of the massacre happened to be Muslim? Fortunately, there has been no wave or feeling of anti-Muslim xenophobia in Spain following the attacks. Violence was not met with violence. Hearts and minds were focused on the victims and their grieving families and loved ones. However, there is no doubt that the Muslim community in Spain has come under intense scrutiny-

and some might argue, suspicion. Although the vast majority of citizens are able to distinguish between the actions of a few individuals of a religious community, and its peaceful majority, a sense of unease and distrust nonetheless hangs in the air. The repeated association of Islam and terrorism in the press can lead to an entire faith being tarnished by fundamentalist violence.

It was to prevent this association from becoming further entrenched, and to affirm the common desire for peace proclaimed by all religions, that the Madrid Platform for Interreligious Dialogue decided to organize an event that would call for peace and interreligious harmony. The goal was to prevent intolerance from gaining ground, perhaps even sub-consciously, in the psyche of citizens. A young organization, the Madrid Platform for Interreligious Dialogue was born last April when an interreligious prayer was held in one of Madrid's formal mosques, known as the Tetuan Mosque. Afterwards, a small group of individuals from different religious traditions decided to meet regularly and gradually the Platform took shape and grew. This January, a day-long workshop was held in which each religion had the chance to explain its creed, and then perform a cultural activity (singing, dancing, story-telling, theatre), that reflected another dimension of its beliefs.

The 'tren de la vida', or peace train, was thus the third event organized by the Madrid Platform for Interreligious dialogue, and by far the most successful both in terms of turnout and media coverage. One thousand Madrileños got up early Sunday morning on May the 9th, to take the train to Acalá de Henares, the city with a 13% immigrant population on the outskirts of Madrid from which so many of the victims boarded 'trains of death'. The trains were packed, and the stickers bearing the logo of the event (Religions for Peace), ubiquitous. Once all gathered in Acalá de Henares, there was a powerful silent procession towards the university, with a moment of silence before the Romanian Adventist Church, in memory of the 16 Romanian victims who died in the attacks (almost one third of the people who lost their lives were

foreigners). The historic, cobble-stoned patio of the University of Alcalá served as the setting for the spiritual readings from each religious community. There was also a guided meditation by the group Brahma Kumaris, and beautiful music by the choir of the Romanian Adventist Church. At the end of the ceremony, the energy was palpable as the Himno de Alegría (Hymn of Joy) was sung, and peace bracelets symbolically tied to the wrists of the neighbour sitting next to us.

The challenge for the Platform, and for other interfaith groups in Madrid, is to now take this energy and dialogue into the community, and start breaking down the invisible barriers that exist to everyday interreligious and intercultural interaction. Beyond the big events, into which goes months of planning, interfaith groups must remember that it is direct, personal contact with members of other faiths that opens hearts and minds—speeches and platitudes are easily listened to, and then forgotten.

The Spanish press is currently sounding the alarm over the 'lack of control' of mosques and imams in Spain, and over the astounding lack of knowledge of the 600 000-800 000 strong Spanish Muslim community, the vast majority of whom are Moroccan. The emphasis is on security, control and monitoring the content of sermons. Regulating the unknown—not truly getting to know the Other.

All Muslim religious leaders in Spain have forcefully condemned the attacks, and many have invited the media into their mosques, both to dispel fears and accusations of fomenting terrorism, and to show a non-threatening face of Islam to the public. The individuals of the Madrid Platform for Interreligious Dialogue can take advantage of this huge surge of interest in (and fear of) Islam to encourage their co-religionists to reach out to their fellow Muslim citizens in concrete ways (why not, for example, buy one's meat from a halal butcher, and thus get to know one's local Muslim shopkeepers?).

In this respect, the upcoming Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona this July 7th-13th, presents a timely opportunity for the Platform to strengthen its work in the Madrid community. The Madrid Platform for Interreligious dialogue will have a stand at the Solidarity Fair of the Parliament, in which it will be

able to display its activities and network with similar groups from around the world. As a young, evolving organization, the Platform will benefit tremendously from hearing the experiences and initiatives of other interfaith groups operating in cities experiencing growing religious and cultural diversity. Its members will come back charged with energy, ready to translate and adapt what they have learned into action. In short, into the "simple and profound" acts that the Parliament is seeking to promote at the local level worldwide. Taking the four themes of the Parliament as guidance (refugees, Third World debt, lack of access to clean water, and religious violence), Platform members will return with a sharpened focus on how to tackle real world issues that are displacing ever greater numbers of people—an increasing number of whom are ending up in Madrid.

The signs are encouraging. Madrid is determined to stay an open city—as open to the latest crop of immigrants as it was to the immigrants from poorer parts of Spain that arrived in the 1960's and 1970's. The message in the media is that the cultural landscape of Madrid has changed irrevocably—the new immigrant reality is transforming Madrid into 'Madrid Mestizo' (Mixed Madrid). Public discourse now consists of words such as 'convivencia' (coexistence, living together). Religious communities in Madrid can and indeed must be at the forefront of assuring the genuine quality of this convivencia. After a barbaric act of religiously motivated and legitimated violence, interfaith and religious groups have a responsibility to be active in showing that religion can also play a positive role in the world.

Postscript: May 23rd. The memorial to the 192 victims in Atocha rail station is crowded with people paying their respects. Yesterday, Samuel, the son of Ana Isabel Gil Pérez, would have been born. The candles give off an intense heat. Poems, prayers, messages of peace, stuffed animals and other personal objects cover the ground. The pain and emotion are still raw. A girl places a plant of yellow flowers by the memorial. In the face of senseless violence, incredible spirit remains.....

*Kathryn Lum  
Europe and Middle East Young Friends*

## Church and Peace

The Annual General Meeting 2004 took place 14-18 May at the Schänzli Mennonite Congregation in Muttenz, Switzerland. There were 52 participants from nine countries: The Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic. FWCC/EMES was represented as one of five Friends entities among the corporate members of this Christian group.

A few partial quotes will give an idea of it: 'Church and Peace is an association of Christian communities, organisations, and individuals, who believe that peace testimony and witness are essential characteristics of the church of Jesus Christ.' There is thus an understanding of discipleship, 'committed to celebrating his presence among us - to demonstrating solidarity with the victims of injustice, hatred, and violence - to refusing to be engaged in weapons production or to be trained in violence - to learning to practise reconciliation and love of enemies in situations of conflict.' A call goes out 'to live a new life, to see the presence of God in each person, to invest creativity and resources in peace service, to work for the conversion of military industries, to seek inter-church and international understanding and exchange.'

The C&P Administration Committee Annual Report 2003 mentioned a paper entitled 'What is a Peace Church?' as a guide to enrich discussion on vision and aims, one concern here being the need 'to get to know each other better as members of the committee in order to benefit from each person's gifts during this time of service to the network.' This is a concept very dear to Church and Peace as networking is seen in terms of needed dialogue in particular among churches. For example, the C&P International Office Annual Report 2003 deplors the lack of change within the churches in the wake of the widespread movements against the war in Iraq. In this context, C&P's place and role in the wider church-community are seen in constant need of sharpening. To this end, conferences, communication, and inter-visitation are indispensable tools. Regional activities include field work and local meetings - reports were received from Hungary, France, Britain, and Ireland. It is dedicated C&P members who cultivate contacts with church communities, NGOs, government officials and relevant organisations such as foundations.



This observer was impressed by the cheerful earnestness with which activities took their course, be they reports, worship sharing, sermon, singing, or the working groups on Militarisation of the European Union and Integrity of Creation - all with an air of reason rather than routine, waging rather than waiting. What a Quaker can take away from this meeting is well summed up by the announcement, in the Church and Peace current publication, of the topic of the 24th peace consultation of peace service agencies and peace groups affiliated with the main Protestant church body in Germany: 'Reconciliation - Exploring what our theology asks of us, determining what is relevant in the current political context.' The message would seem to be one of leadings in the way of paying equal attention to theory and practice, to concerns and their resolution, to praying for those in power and to have them respond to a bit of Friendly persuasion. It might be added that there were three individual Quakers, besides the ones who represented the two Yearly Meetings that are corporate members of Church and Peace; this reporter is applying for individual membership.

If you would like more information about Church and Peace see [www.church-and-peace.org](http://www.church-and-peace.org)

or contact: Church & Peace International Office, Ringstrasse 14, D-35641 Schöffengrund Germany tel: +49 6445 5588 fax: +49 6445 5070 e-mail: [IntlOffice@church-and-peace.org](mailto:IntlOffice@church-and-peace.org)

*Fritz Renken, Switzerland Yearly Meeting, and newly appointed EMES Representative to Church and Peace*

## Visit to Friends in the Middle East



*The Wall*

I have this week returned from a journey in the Middle East. Life in Palestine continues to be grim. The route and extension of the separation wall leads to more and more hardship. Through newspapers and television, most of us have some image in our heads of the terrible physical destruction, but it is hard to find the words to convey the psychological and emotional impact of the ongoing occupation on those who have suffered it for so long. However while I was visiting, Friends in Ramallah rejoiced at the opening of new premises for the Play Centre. The tape was cut by Violet Zaru. I stayed in the Friends School where I met the enthusiastic new Director, Joyce Ajlouny, a local Quaker, who has taken over the role from Colin South. The old Meeting House refurbishments are almost complete although funding is still needed so that heating system can be installed and furniture purchased. Friends and others are looking forward to its use as a resource for local groups working for peace and justice. Jean Zaru, the Monthly Meeting clerk, particularly asked me to convey to Friends thanks for ongoing support for the Monthly Meeting Hardship Fund. (Recent donations from across Europe have totalled more than 3000 euros) Friends have been able to provide quiet and instant help to local families at times of crisis. They were glad recently to be able to join a local ecumenical initiative to buy food to send to people in Rafah following the destruction of homes there.

In Brummana, Lebanon, I also stayed in the Friends School and met with local Quakers. Brummana High School attracts students from across the Middle East. Here, as in Ramallah, there is an emphasis on Quaker

values and a desire to build up the Quaker ethos within the school. The local Quaker community has long felt isolated from the rest of the world family of Friends. The political situation has eased and we are optimistic that more links can be maintained in future. Friends from Britain serving on the QuIET board (Quaker International Educational Trust) visit the school and maintain good personal links with the Quaker families; there are to be two British Friends in Residence in the school in the coming year; we hope that there will be a representative from Brummana at next year's EMES Annual Meeting in Switzerland.

In Jerusalem and Amman I met with Quaker Service (AFSC) workers and was much impressed by the work they carry out in the Quaker name. They operate through supporting local groups and encouraging networking and cooperation both in grass-root projects and at regional political level. I was even fortunate enough to meet Rick McDowell and Mary Trotochaud, the AFSC workers based in Baghdad when they turned up at meeting for worship in Brummana during a visit



*Violet cutting the tape*

to Lebanon. Their movements have been restricted and life and work in Baghdad inevitably unpredictable but they have been able to focus their work on support to emerging Iraqi NGOs. By mentoring and financially supporting local partners' projects and programs, AFSC strengthens and develops their capacity as emerging non-governmental organizations. For those who have access to the internet you can read good up-to-date reports on: <http://www.afsc.org/middleeast>

*Bronwyn Harwood July 2004*

## East And West

*Tony Manasseh member of Brummanah Monthly Meeting and former student at the school has sent the following article which he wrote for the Old Scholars' Magazine:*

Hardly a day goes by without hearing the bad news of so many killed or injured, so many driven out of their homes, so many losing their dearest ones. All in the name of religion, values, fairness and the like. Many people know how untrue these reasons are. Yet we do nothing, but rather we try to rationalize who is right and who is wrong and how. Sometimes we take sides contributing to this polarization. By so doing, we are denying ourselves the right to refuse and to revolt against all those horrors. We all feel how hard it is in our days to be living in a world of injustice, terror and political arrogance.

As leaderships are getting more and more futile the world is in deeper misery. No modern leader has gotten yet to the stage of refusing the idea of arms as a solution between nations. Mahatma Ghandi's example has been forgotten and no nation has yet shown the birth of his like. The news media flourish on bad news and in certain instances they make them happen. What a disaster we are driving ourselves into.

Neither the East nor the West can claim supremacy in this dual. Both seem to be committing the same mistakes and causing equal harm to humanity. The solution has to come from within both bosoms, from people who share the same measures of what is right and what is wrong. There are more elements bringing cultures together rather than separating them. Values like honesty, helpfulness, preservation of our young, education and scientific advancement are but a few elements of these common-to-all values. If we take these as the common grounds for coming together, this world may be a safer place to be in.

The intellectual power of the world is still silent and often ineffective. Yet there is tremendous potential in its arousal. The educated and cultured "elite" are people who have been educated and trained as free thinkers and believers in the human element as a living soul that has that of God in it. These are the people who have been to multinational, multireligious, multiracial

and mixed school and universities and have crossed the barrier of ignorance into the supreme values of humanity. Having done so, they can not but exercise their freedom of belief and freedom of choice in whatever they do. These are the true believers in God and the honest peacemakers.

To the older generations of this intelligentsia, I say: pave the way for those who will carry your banner of freedom and righteousness and to those of you freshly coming up to the platform of life I say: there is a heavy load to carry and a whole world to make better.

*Tony Manasseh, June 2004*



*Brummana High School was founded in 1873 by Theophilus Waldmeier, a Swiss missionary, who joined the Society of Friends and became a Quaker. Dr Walid Khoury the principal wrote recently: "BHS today continues its tradition of accepting students not only from many countries but also of many cultures and religious faiths. Such diversity is encouraged and valued. Many of those educated at BHS have become leaders in their own countries in commerce, politics, medicine, and education. We at BHS renew our commitment to provide a democratic well-rounded education in a Quaker environment that brings out the "Light within" each individual and at the same time promotes both academic excellence and community service."*

# Overcoming Direct and Structural Violence: Truth and Peacemaking in the Palestinian Experience

*Jean Zaru, clerk of Ramallah Monthly Meeting, is one of the founding members of Sabeel, an ecumenical grassroots Palestinian Liberation Theology Centre based in Jerusalem. As a Palestinian woman living under Israeli military rule and at the same time finding herself in a traditional culture, her life has been devoted to the struggle for liberation – liberation of Palestinians, for women, for all people. We quote below the closing paragraphs from Jean's most recent Sabeel publication.*

These are very hard times in Palestine. We have been working for a long time to end occupation, oppression and destruction, without any political gains. Fear and loss surround us, and many forces are at work to make us feel isolated, marginalized and disempowered. At best the work ahead seems overwhelming. Death and loss rearrange our priorities, and teach us how much we need each other. Many activists mistrust religion and spirituality, sometimes for good reason. But each of us is in this work for peace and justice because something is sacred to us -so sacred that it means more than convenience or comfort. It might be God, or the Spirit, or the sacredness of life and mother earth, or belief in freedom. Whatever it is, it can nurture us.

For more than thirty-six years, I have been walking that edge where the spiritual meets the political. For me, the two have always been integrated. My spirituality is rooted in the human dignity and human rights of all people, and the sacredness of mother earth. I do feel compelled to take action to work for a world in which human freedom and dignity can flourish. Spirituality can bring life and vibrancy and imagination into my struggle, but the mixture of religion and politics can also fuel the most extreme and violent acts and lead to systems of great repression.....

.....I have learned that the struggle for justice is one struggle, and that an action taken to subvert violence and strengthen human rights in one place is an action on behalf of people everywhere. I now understand that our global responsibilities and relationships have a local face, and no matter where

we live we can work for human rights and a culture of non-violence. The kinships we form as we do, serve as the prototype of a new community that knows no national, racial or gender/sexual boundaries.

We must not give up, for to give up is to give in to the forces of darkness. We must continue to fan the embers of light no matter how small they are, because these embers of light give hope to the forefront of the struggle and will keep the work for justice and peace in the Middle East alive. Martin Luther King defined peace not as the absence of war but the presence of justice. He also wisely stated:

“We live in extreme times. The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love?”

“We will have to repent in this generation, not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people.”

*Jean Zaru*



*You can find out more about Sabeel, including the full text of this and other publications from:*

*Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center  
PO Box 49084, 91491 Jerusalem, via Israel*

*E-mail: [sabeel@sabeel.org](mailto:sabeel@sabeel.org)  
<http://www.sabeel.org>*

## New look, new office space, new executives at FWCC World Office as of July 1st.



The new logo was prompted by the Section of the Americas' change to a colourful format, with the World Office's being similar, but round with a dove.

With the decision of Britain YM to close the Quaker International Centre and to lease out the entire building the World Office found a new home at 173 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AX, UK. The new telephone number is 44-020-7663-1199; fax 44-020-7663-1189. The email address remains world@fwcc.quaker.org

The staff turnover has transitioned more gradually since March when Nancy Irving of North Pacific YM [USA] joined Elizabeth Duke as joint General Secretaries. Annis Bleeke, interim Associate Secretary, then returned to the US. July 1 saw the arrival of Joseph Andugu, Central YM [Kenya], as the new Associate Secretary, and the departure/retirement of Elizabeth Duke. Elizabeth is planning to return to her home in Aotearoa/New Zealand via an extended trip through Canada and the US in September and October. She will be missed. Nancy and Joseph ask for your prayers and support as they begin their work together.

Fortunately, the rest of the staff in the World Office remains the same! They are Michael Booth, Financial Administrator, Thecla Geraghty, Office Manager, and Graham Ellis, International Membership Secretary.



*Nancy Irving*

*Joseph Andugu*

### Changes too in EMES

**1. Administration.** Since the Annual Meeting in April Anna Dunford has been helping with the EMES office work for an average of 2 days per week. Before then she helped out for just a few hours a month with the financial side of things. The benefits are already clear: Anna has been revising out-of-date publications – the EMES handbook and the leaflet with information on

where Quakers meet around Europe and with the assistance of Jonathan Riddell of EMEYF has been working on a much improved web-site for EMES. Beonwyn has been able to travel more knowing that there was office cover back at home.

**2. Introducing the new Visiting Friends.** Julia Ryberg and Ute Caspers write: EMES ran a Visiting Friend's Scheme from 1999 to 2001 with each Visiting Friend serving for one year. The aim was to visit small groups and isolated Friends for spiritual nurture and learning. After this initial programme, EMES has decided to continue this valuable practice but in a different form. A group of six Visiting Friends has been appointed to serve for a period of three years, which will provide for better continuity. What can the Visiting Friends offer? We hope to serve as listening ears and spiritual support, sharing our spiritual journeys and Quaker experience with—and learning from—Friends in different parts of the Section. We are prepared to facilitate retreats and to offer workshops and learning opportunities about the Quaker way. It is our hope that we can help individuals and groups to get “unstuck”! The Section welcomes requests from Yearly Meetings and smaller groups who feel the need for support from the Visiting Friends. If you would like to involve the Visiting Friends in your plans, contact the EMES Executive Secretary, Bronwyn Harwood.

The current Visiting Friends are:

*David Blamires, Britain YM.* David is involved in Quaker publications. His special interests and resources for the Visiting Friends programme include Quaker structures and Quaker history. His initial focus will be with Friends in Finland.

*Ute Caspers, German YM.* Ute was Visiting Friend for the Section in 2000. She is an ecumenical peace worker and is involved in the Alternative to Violence Project. Her initial focus will be with Friends in the Baltic region.

*Tamara Dragadze, Britain YM.* Tamara has broad international experience and speaks many languages.

She has worked in peace and conciliation among various ethnic groups in conflict and also with individuals. Her initial focus will be with Friends in Moscow.

*Tony Fitt, Britain YM.* Tony is trained in mediation and is involved in EAPPI. He is interested in the Bible and the life of Jesus. Tony's wife, Moira, who will accompany him on some travels, has a concern for healing. Tony and Moira will focus initially on visiting Friends in central Europe.

*Diana Lampen, Britain YM.* Diana has skills in handling conflict, and she is experienced in facilitating Experiment with Light workshops. Her initial focus will be with Danish Friends.

*Julia Ryberg, Sweden YM.* Julia facilitates retreats and learning groups. Her initial focus will be investigating on-line learning and spiritual nurture for Friends. This ties in with her studies at Earlham School of Religion, a Quaker seminary in the USA.

## News from Friends in Congo

As the secretary for Europe and Middle East Section of FWCC I often receive messages from Friends in other parts of the world. I feel the need to share with you one such message which arrived recently.

*Greetings to you all in love and peace of Lord*

*We want to inform you the inhuman situation that are happening at Bukavu where Legal Representative / General secretary of Congo YM and 325 Friends are leaving because of the new war which happens there. Surely people at Bukavu have big problem; people are killing, all things were looted, plundering by the soldiers and all kinds of sexual violences are happening to them. Many Friends take refuge at Uvira. But good news is the wife of Mkoko gave birth to girl during the war.*

*Friends, face to those inhuman acts that passed in Eastern part of Congo the temptation comes to say that the God of civilians without defences in DRC has died but we know that God is provider of his people and we hope that our Lord is living.*

*Friends in Bukavu need your prayers and your urgent human assistance and your experience for making peace in Congo*

*Mkoko Boseka, General Secretary of Congo YM*

The Evangelical Friends Yearly Meeting in Bukavu has about 400 members. They have been working closely with Quaker Service Norway's Change Agents for Peace Program for more than five years. During this period they have developed their capacity to serve their community in this highly conflicted time. They have

helped to run humanitarian assistance activities, particularly during the Goma Volcano crisis, they have established a trauma-healing team, and they have been working with all components of their community to resolve and transform their conflict experience.

Bridget Butt works on behalf of Quaker Service Norway in the region and has worked closely with Mkoko Boseka. She expects to visit Bukavu Friends later in August or September.

I first met Mkoko several years ago at France Yearly Meeting so was particularly pleased to meet up with him again in January at the FWCC Triennial in New Zealand. He and others from Congo and neighbouring Yearly Meetings spoke movingly of their work for peace and of their (at that time) optimism that there was a more stable situation emerging. They talked hopefully of their desire for volunteers from Europe to go to help establish educational and other projects. Now the situation has become so unstable again their immediate needs are for much more basic supplies.

*Bronwyn Harwood*

To assist Bukavu Friends financially you can use the following account number:

CEEACO No. 13246 -01 -89

Interbank Burundi

Corresponding with :

Citbank N A

111 Wall Street

Compte no 3608 -3143 USD

Code swift : CITI US33

## EMES on-line!

<http://www.fwccemes.org>

EMES now has a new web site, created by Jonathan Riddell (EMEYF). The new FWCC 'look' was developed by the Section of the Americas. The new World Office logo can be seen on page 10.

New features include the list of Meetings for Worship within EMES. Please do keep us informed of any changes to your Meeting's details, be it contact person, location or even times & days, so we can keep this resource up to date. Many thanks to all of you who have helped me collate this information – I couldn't have done it without you.

In the Documents section you will see number of documents available in a variety of languages. We hope to expand this section over time so please pass on anything that you feel would be appropriate to include. We would also love to have contributions for the Photos section.

I hope you will enjoy using the new web site, and keep going back to see how it develops.

Anna Dunford  
Assistant to the Executive Secretary EMES  
[anna.dunford@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:anna.dunford@blueyonder.co.uk)

## New Publication

**“When the rains return. Towards Justice and Peace in the Middle East”** This book describes the experiences and analyses of the International Working Party, composed of eleven Quakers and three friends-of-Quakers, who recently visited Israel, Palestine and neighbouring countries. A valuable resource in understanding this very complex and troubling issue.

Copies available at \$15 (U.S.) each plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling. International shipping rates will apply to orders outside the U.S. Discount rates are available on orders of five copies or more.

American Friends Service Committee, Literature Resources, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA19102-1479, U.S.A. For more information see the website: [www.afsc.org/resource.htm](http://www.afsc.org/resource.htm)

## Diary Dates 2004

**25-29 August France Yearly Meeting**, Conquerac, South France. Contact Louise Elias [lelias@tele2.fr](mailto:lelias@tele2.fr) 5 ave de la Mijeanne, F-11600 Fraïsse Carbardès, France

**16-20 September Baltic Friends Gathering**, Nida, Lithuania. Contact Hans Aaen Engtoftevej 25, DK-3520 Arum Denmark. [hansaaen@teliamail.dk](mailto:hansaaen@teliamail.dk)

**17-19 September Border Meeting**, Lievelede, Netherlands. Contact Pieter Ketner Algemeer 42, 6721 GD Bennekom, Netherlands [pieter.ketner@wur.nl](mailto:pieter.ketner@wur.nl)

**22-24 October EMEYF Annual Meeting**, Quaker House, Brussels. Contact EMEYF Quaker House, 50 Square Ambiorix, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium [emeyf@qcea.org](mailto:emeyf@qcea.org)

**30-31 October Denmark Yearly Meeting**, Copenhagen, Denmark. Contact Morgens Clausen Kvækerne, Drejervej 17-4, DK-2400 København, Denmark. [m.clausen@post.tele.dk](mailto:m.clausen@post.tele.dk)

**5-7 November Economic Justice & the EU Conference**, Brussels, Belgium. Jointly run by QCEA/QPSW. Contact Suzanne Ismail, QPSW Friends House 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ, England. [suzannei@quaker.org.uk](mailto:suzannei@quaker.org.uk)

**11-14 November German Yearly Meeting**, Bad Pyrmont, Germany. Contact Quäkerburo, Plankstraße 20, Berlin D-10117, Germany [buro@quaeker.org](mailto:buro@quaeker.org)

**26-28 November European Quaker Peace & Service Consultations**, Brussels, Belgium. Contact Bronwyn Harwood EMES Office [emes@fwcc.quaker.org](mailto:emes@fwcc.quaker.org)

**Among Friends** is the newsletter of Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation.

Also available at: <http://www.fwccemes.org>

We want Among Friends to reflect the diversity of Quaker life and experience across the Section and welcome articles, photos and news of forthcoming events.

Contributions towards the costs of production are also welcome.

**Deadline for Among Friends 96: 22 October 2004.**